

Addressing these concerns will not be easy, but I remain hopeful that Israel, her neighbors, and the U.S. can get the peace process back on track and that Israel will continue to thrive as a vibrant and open democratic society.

I join my colleagues in recognizing Israel's 60th Anniversary.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. DEVONG PECK

**HON. MICHAEL N. CASTLE**

OF DELAWARE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2008*

Mr. Castle. Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to recognize Mr. DeVong Peck, who was nominated to be the 2008 Delaware Boys & Girls Club Youth of the Year.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the Reader's Digest have nationally sponsored the Youth of the Year program since 1947. The goal of Youth of the Year has been to recognize outstanding members of the Boys & Girls Club and their contributions to their club, community, school, and family. More than 32,000 youth are served by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Delaware.

Twelve students were nominated for the honor of Youth of the Year through an intensive local and state level selection process, including the nominees' personal contribution to home and family, community, school and their Boys & Girls Club. The nominees had to prepare two essays explaining why post-high school education is important and what the club means to them. Additionally, students had to prepare a 3–5 minute speech and have an interview session with a panel of judges. The candidates attended the Youth of the Year Summit, where they received professional guidance regarding public speaking, writing, and interviewing skills.

After winning the local Youth of the Year award, DeVong moved onto the state level competition, where he refined his essay and prepared for the next round of interviews. DeVong was a highly qualified candidate for the Youth of the Year 2008. He won the Governor's Youth Volunteer Service Award, the Robert Taylor Character and Leadership Award, and the Dover High School Superstar Award. At the Welsey College Boys & Girls Club, DeVong is a member of the Keystone Club and an active volunteer with numerous other organizations.

Once again, I would like to commend DeVong Peck for being nominated as the Boys & Girls Club of Delaware's Youth of the Year.

JOINT SESSION ADDRESS BY IRISH TAOISEACH BERTIE AHERN

**HON. JAMES T. WALSH**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2008*

Mr. WALSH of New York. Madam Speaker, I was deeply honored to accompany my good

friend and partner in peace Bertie Ahern before one of his last and most prestigious official engagements, less than a week before he stands down from office.

Taoiseach Ahern is one of the finest public servants I have ever known. For more than 30 years he has served his community and the people of Ireland valiantly and with a prevailing sense of civic duty. Bertie Ahern's persistence led to the signing of the Good Friday Accord, the St. Andrews Agreement and more than a decade of prosperity for Ireland. I believe that will be the hallmark of his legacy: commitment to peace, prosperity and progress.

As a fellow elected official who will also be transitioning back into private life, I wish him and his family well in whatever future endeavors they choose to undertake.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE INAUGURAL FLIGHT OF EMERALD COAST HONOR FLIGHT

**HON. JEFF MILLER**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2008*

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is a great honor for me to rise today to recognize the Inaugural Mission of Emerald Coast Honor Flight on April 30, 2008. The organization's efforts serve as a much-deserved tribute to our Nation's veterans.

Emerald Coast Honor Flight was established as a regional program in my district in Northwest Florida to fly World War II veterans to Washington, DC, for one day and give them a chance to see the memorials specifically dedicated to the conflicts in which they bravely served. The organization is privately funded, and with the support of individuals and businesses alike, the trip is made at absolutely no cost to the veteran.

The Emerald Coast is well-known for its unwavering support for our men and women in uniform in both current and past conflicts. With a strong military presence and nearly 110,000 veterans, there is a tremendous appreciation in the area for those who put their lives on the line to defend liberty. It is therefore of little surprise to me that people throughout Florida's First Congressional District came together so willingly and eagerly to make this day a reality. For many of our veterans, especially World War II veterans who have waited so long for a memorial, this will be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. The Greatest Generation made our world a better place because they fought for what was right, and it is right for us to show them our gratitude at every opportunity.

Our men and women in uniform have always stood ready to defend liberty, and for that we owe them an eternal debt of gratitude. I am deeply moved by Emerald Coast Honor Flight's efforts to convey to these veterans the knowledge that their service will be long remembered and appreciated.

Madam Speaker, on behalf of the United States Congress, I would like to recognize the efforts of all who worked toward making this inaugural flight possible. The goal of Emerald Coast Honor Flight is noble and commend-

able, and I look forward to many more flights being made by this organization.

HONORING THE LIFE OF DANE BRITTON

**HON. JERRY MORAN**

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, April 30, 2008*

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of a man who positively influenced the future of central Kansas and in the process touched the lives of thousands of his fellow citizens.

It is a privilege for me to pay tribute to the life of Mr. Dane Britton of Ellsworth, Kansas.

As Kansans, we are dutifully aware of our State motto, *Ad Astra Per Aspera*, which translates, "To the Stars Through Difficulties." Dane lived this theme with passion.

In 1975, at only 23 years of age, Dane was named Police Officer of the Year for Houston, Texas. Five years later, Dane returned home to Ellsworth to serve as president and chief executive officer of Citizens State Bank—representing the third generation of his family's leadership at the bank. At the same time, Dane stepped forward as a civic leader in his hometown. He was instrumental in securing construction and expansion of the Ellsworth Correctional Facility. His efforts helped bring Cashco, a manufacturing firm, to the community and helped prevent closure of the Independent Salt Company in Kanopolis, Kansas. Dane also provided leadership for construction of the local Performing Arts Center and the Ellsworth Fire Station. As a member of the Ellsworth City Council, Dane led an effort to establish 911 emergency services to the community. He also served as chairman of the board for Smoky Hills Public Television.

In 1988, Dane was appointed Director of Security and Drug Enforcement for the U.S. Department of the Interior. In that role, he oversaw law enforcement responsibilities for all interior department lands—including two presidential emergency centers. In 1992, Dane was selected as one of two Eisenhower Fellows and in so doing became the first Kansan ever chosen for this honor.

Later, Dane moved to Salina, Kansas, where he worked as a stock broker and again established a leadership presence in the community. Dane was elected chairman of the Salina Planning Commission and served on the Salina Community Theater Board of Directors.

Dane touched the lives of many people. His civic leadership was marked by strategic thinking, passion and a willingness to work to make certain that good things happen.

"What he did for Ellsworth was incredible," said Nick Slechta, director of the Ellsworth Chamber of Commerce and a longtime friend of Dane's. "He was very proficient in everything he did. He put so much gusto into every part of his work." I can think of no finer tribute.

Dane's dedication to his community, the State of Kansas and our country was exceptional. I join Dane's many friends and admirers in extending my deepest sympathies to his family during their time of loss.